

EVIDENCE WEEK 2019



In June 2019 more than 100 MPs and peers got involved in Evidence Week in the UK Parliament. They received 3-minute briefings at 'evidence pods' on how to handle the evidence on 20 pressing policy issues in the Upper Waiting Hall in the House of Commons.

Evidence Week in Parliament aimed to equip MPs with the tools they need to interrogate evidence across a range of policy issues. Between elections, Parliament is fundamental to scrutinising the evidential reasoning of policy. Increasingly, this means asking searching questions of new sources of data, as well as complex interactions between variables and trade offs to consider.

To open Evidence Week community speakers brought to life the same evidence issues that the MPs are currently dealing with, as outlined in new results released at the event from Ipsos MORI's MP survey, produced by SAGE Publishing.

Innovative 3-minute evidence briefings

Evidence Week was run by Sense about Science, in partnership with the House of Commons Library, POST (the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology) and the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee.

We brought in 20 research groups from partner organisations to host innovative evidence pods. These 3-minute briefings tackled issues such as how to visualise community inequalities, work out the effect of pupil premium or see the scale of the drone noise problem. We counted 163 of these innovative briefings given to MPs and peers across the two days.

“Worrying about whether politicians have science backgrounds is a mistake. What we should ask is, what are the insights and resources from research that would help politicians? That’s what Evidence Week is for.” - Tracey Brown, Sense about Science

“I think Evidence Week is really important – we politicians often seem to shoot from the hip.” - Rupa Huq MP



Norman Lamb MP at the opening event in Strangers' Dining Room in the House of Commons



Paul Sweeney MP at the 'Visualising community inequalities' pod



Chi Onwurah MP at the Evidence Week opening event

MPs found the 3-minute format to be something they could work with...

“What was great about this was that it encouraged us to see it as it was just 3 minutes. Now, I did not take just 3 minutes, I took longer, because I was really interested.”

“I learnt more in five minutes than in a very long time.”

“I thought the pods were an excellent concept and coupled with the enthusiasm of individuals was a good partnership for promoting science”

A summary of Evidence Week's impact...

- 83 MPs engaged (13% of all MPs), plus 20 peers and 29 government/parliamentary staff
- Committees particularly well represented at Evidence Week included the Science and Technology Committee and the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee among others
- 237,000 views and 2,265 engagements on Sense about Science Evidence Week tweets, with even more MPs, peers and researchers connecting using #EvidenceWeek
- The BBC (Today in Parliament programme) and The Times picked up the story. It was also listed on relevant parliamentary publications



Matt Western MP
@MattWestern_

Follow

Great to hear from @UniofNottingham about their latest research which could help improve safety and prevent fatalities on our roads. Really glad to see academics engaging with Parliament during #EvidenceWeek!
#SeeBikeSayBike

5:45 PM - 27 Jun 2019



Catherine McKinnell
@CatMcKinnell

Follow

Good to drop by the Durham University Evidence Centre for Education #EvidencePod in Parliament yday & hear more about their work on the impact of Pupil Premium as part of #EvidenceWeek @DECE_DU #DECEatEvidenceWeek



David Anderson
@bricksilk

Follow

Replying to @senseaboutsci @PublicPolicyUoS

Thanks for laying this on – you did a great job. It was interesting to discuss the role of predictive analytics in managing electricity consumption, and how it may impinge on protection of personal data.

6:22 PM - 26 Jun 2019

The image shows a screenshot of a newspaper article and a parliamentary website page. The newspaper article is from THE TIMES, dated JUNE 17 2019, 12:01AM. The headline is "Why evidence matters: cutting through the noise" by JOHN PULLINGER. The article is part of a "RED BOX" by JOHN PULLINGER. The website page is from www.parliament.uk and features a navigation menu with links to Home, Parliamentary business, MPs, Lords & offices, About Parliament, Get involved, Visit, and Education. The main content area is titled "Evidence Week 2019" and includes the dates "24 Jun 2019 - 19 Jun 2019, 16:00 - 17:00", the location "Opening: Stranger's Dining Room, Evidence Pods: Upper Waiting Hall, UK Parliament", and the contact information "Contact: amelia@senseaboutscience.org". There is also a "Contact POST" section with the address "Parliamentary Technology, Houses of Parliament, Westminster, London, SW1A 0AA".